GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2917
ANSWERED ON:11.08.2005
DECLARATION OF ANCIENT MONUMENTS SITES
Rao Shri Kavuru Samba Siva

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government vested with the power of declaring the ancient monuments, archaeological sites and remains of national cultural heritage without any consideration of religion and communities;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government proposes to enact a comprehensive law to declare monuments/sites as of national importance; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER FOR INFORMATION & BROADCASTING AND CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY)

(a)&(b) The monuments/sites are declared as of national importance under the provision of section 4 of the Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 without any consideration of religion and community. In the above act, ancient monument has been defined as, "any structure, erection, or monument, or any tumulus or place of interment, or any cave, rock sculpture, inscription or monolith", which is of historical, archaeological or artistic interest and which has been in existence for not less than one hundred years". Under the prescribed procedure, the objections/views of all interested parties, including the State Government are considered, before notifying various sites/monuments as national monuments.

(c)&(d) Government is contemplating to set up Heritage Sites Commission. As the present legal and institutional framework is not adequate to address the documentation, inventorisation and conservation of built heritage in its broadest outline, it is proposed to constitute a Heritage Sites Commission. The Commission would lay down broad policy guidelines and take steps to ensure that such guidelines are observed.

The mandate of the proposed Heritage Sites Commission is being worked out. It is expected that the Commission would:

- tender advice to Govt. on heritage matters.

- frame guidelines in the matter of conservation of heritage monuments and sites.

- can study or cause to study in important matters regarding conservation of heritage and submit reports to the Government.

- suggest appropriate amendments to the existing heritage legislations.